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Redevelopment Board Minutes 02/08/2010

Minutes of Monday, February 8, 2010
Approved February 22, 2010

Second Floor Conference Room, Town Hall

Members Present:
Bruce Fitzsimmons
Chris Loreti, Chairman
Roland Chaput
Ed Tsoi

Also Present: Carol Kowalski, Director of Planning & Community Development, Mike Rademacher, Town Engineer, and several members of the public

Mr. Loreti called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

The first order of business was the formal hearing to adopt the Board of Survey Regulations.~ Mr. Loreti provided a summary of the Board of Survey authority in Arlington, and the Board of Survey legislation enacted by the legislature in 2009 expanding that authority and vesting it in the Redevelopment Board. Mr. Loreti explained that the new law requires the Board to hold a hearing and adopt regulations. Elisabeth Carr Jones asked about the difference between the former authority and the new Board of Survey law. Clarissa Rowe, speaking not as a Town official but as a landscape architect, explained that it gives the Redevelopment Board the ability to review dimensions, road width, and turning dimensions.

Attorney Dick Keshian asked the number of lots to which the new regulations would apply. Ms. Kowalski said that there was no recent build-out analysis. She opined that such an analysis would be of limited value, since it would not capture opportunities to move or demolish existing building to create buildable lots, which is how many building opportunities were created in recent years here. Ms. Rowe stated that the state prepared a build-out analysis in 2003. Mr. Loreti added that there are opportunities to subdivide in the business districts, too, so there is more future building opportunity than may seem obvious.

Discussion ensued regarding the actual street width of Arlington roadways compared with the 40' called for in the draft regulations. Mr. Rademacher states that a majority of the streets in Arlington have a right-of-way of 40 feet.

Mr. Chaput urged that the language offered to the Board by Brain Rehrig regarding cut-and-fill be added to the regulations. Mr. Rademacher assured the Board that the design standards addressed curves on streets and sight-lines. The Board also discussed with Mr. Rademacher the "residential sub-collector" and "residential access" road-width requirements. The Board appeared satisfied with these requirements. Mr. Keshian stated his belief that many private ways have never been formally accepted by the Town. Mr. Rademacher replied that the fact that many private ways have not been named does not mean they have not been accepted by the Town.

Discussion having ended, Mr. Chaput moved to close the hearing at 7:35pm. Mr. Tsoi seconded, and all voted in favor, 4-0-0.

The Board asked for a revised version along with the comments, and agreed to vote on regulations at a future meeting.

The Board next considered the language for the zoning bylaw amendments. The Board asked that the bracket sign amendment be revised to include the language for irregularly shaped signs and language to ensure the signs would not endanger public safety in strong winds. The Board expressed a desire to avoid allowing tall narrow signs that appeared to be blade signs. Ms. Kowalski would revise the language to address this. The Board also asked how to avoid having such signs on upper stories. Ms. Kowalski said she thought the bylaw already protected against this, and would confer with Michael Byrne to confirm this.

The Board then discussed the articles related to Green Communities designation. Ms. Kowalski was asked to seek from the Green Communities program a written confirmation that having no definition of Research & Development is presumed to allow alternative energy R&D. The Board also discussed getting a written determination from the zoning enforcement officer confirming his verbal determination that alternative energy research and development would currently be allowed by right under the Town's zoning bylaw. Ms. Kowalski would discuss this with Mr. Byrne.

The Board asked Ms. Kowalski to inquire whether the Selectmen would explain to the Redevelopment Board the article regarding expanding the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The Board discussed the School Committee warrant articles on the surplus status of Parmenter and Crosby Schools. Ms. Kowalski was asked to provide previous Town Meeting warrant language on the temporary status to the February 22 Board meeting, and to use this language to draft Town Meeting votes to continue Redevelopment Board jurisdiction over the buildings.

The Board briefly discussed television coverage by Arlington Community Media. Mr. Loreti asked members to consider content and features to update the Redevelopment Board webpage.

Mr. Fitzsimmons moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded and approved 4-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 10:25pm

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Kowalski
Secretary ex Officio